

CLIMATE CHANGE TALKING POINTS: Energy Efficiency Workshop – IEPR
“The Need for Goals to Fulfill the Potential for Efficiency and Conservation”
June 4, 2003

- CA uses lots of energy, much of it efficiently – flat per capita electricity usage while average electricity usage is rising in US.
- Many reasons for efficiency & conservation: air quality, natural resource scarcity, system reliability, cost savings... and now human influence on our climate.
- CA is vulnerable to some adverse effects of climate change and variability; for example: type, timing and amount of precipitation, sea level rise, extreme events, public health.
- US signed the Kyoto Protocol in 1997 agreeing to cut GHGs 7% below 1990 levels averaged over the first commitment period of 2008 – 2012.
- CA contributes 1.4% global GHGs with 0.6% world population.
CA emits 6.2% of US GHGs with 12% of US population.
- States, local governments, and businesses are voluntarily setting GHG reduction targets: NY State Energy Plan – 5% below 1990 by 2010 and 10% by 2020; NJ goal of 3.5% below 1990 by 2005; Northeast states goal at 1990 by 2010 and 10% below by 2020; CA cities include LA, Chula Vista, Oakland, Berkeley ranging from 15% to 30% below 1990 by 2010.
- Poll of 2,000 CA residents released last summer had 62% stated a need for some action to address climate change and 81% favored requiring automakers to cut GHGs from new cars sold in CA.
- Nationally a recent poll of nearly 700 households showed over 90% thought the US should cut its GHGs, 77% supported government regulation of CO₂ and 88% supported commitment to Kyoto Protocol. When asked about their willingness to pay higher prices for goods and services the percentages dropped significantly.
- While Europe is politically committed to cutting GHGs and taken some aggressive measures, most are well behind their Kyoto targets.
- Energy Commission started GHG inventories back in 1988, created a voluntary GHG registry, efforts to green state buildings and vehicle fleet, lots of climate research, and most recently passed legislation to reduce motor vehicle GHGs and increase renewable energy.
- A team of state agency staff have been focusing on ways the state can mitigate GHG emissions and better prepare to adapt to current and future climate changes. Energy efficiency is one key area identified by this team, including further improvements in building & appliance efficiency, as well as sector-specific energy efficiencies such as agriculture, industry, and transportation.

- Goals / Targets / Metrics – many similarities between energy efficiency and greenhouse gases. Both can have “intensity metrics” such as the Bush Administration’s GHG goal. Both can have reductions linked to some base year quantity. Both can look at per capita or quantity changes by sector.
- Two key points to consider in thinking about metrics for energy efficiency or GHG reductions: 1) absolute or total GHGs/energy saved matter most, not just intensity, 2) both require standardized, reliable and very transparent accounting protocols.